

# Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
Airspace Advisory Committee

Date: March 27, 2003

File: AIRSPACE

From: **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
**Division of Right of Way**

Subject: Promotion of the Airspace & Wireless Program

The Airspace Program has been in existence for many years and in 1997 the Wireless & Telecommunications component was added. It is safe to say the program has been a true success story for the Department. Over the years the program has evolved and changed. While we no longer actively promote development of the airspace, we continue, with the assistance of the Airspace Advisory Committee, to make the best use of our right of way assets.

The Department has changed as well. The current hiring freeze notwithstanding, the Department has hired thousands of new employees in the last several years. Many of these employees review our airspace and wireless proposals during the District Airspace Review Process. It is not uncommon to find that these new and conscientious individuals, not only do not understand the Airspace Program, but must be compelled to participate in the process.

To many of these employees, working on airspace and wireless proposals detracts from their main duties of project delivery, maintenance of the highways and other tasks the public expects from Caltrans. Compounding this reluctance is a budgetary situation that requires that time spent on airspace proposals be charged to the reviewing division's overhead expenditure authorization. In other words, all employees, other than those sourced in Right of Way must find time during their normal duties to review and comment on airspace and wireless proposals.

Common misconceptions about the Airspace Program abound. Many do not know that all revenues generated by the Airspace Program are deposited into the State Highway Account (SHA) and are later redirected to the Public Transit Account (PTA). Funds in the PTA are programmed by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for use by public transportation agencies Statewide. These funds, when leveraged with federal funds, can provide a significant source of money and go a long way in helping achieve Department goals in its effort against traffic congestion.

Furthermore, many within the Department do not realize the program has had the full support of the CTC, the AAC and the Department. The Wireless Program came about as a

direct result of efforts by the Governor's Office requesting State Government help implement and promote better telecommunications to assist the public and those conducting business in the State.

The Division of Right of Way would like to request the AAC approach the CTC and ask for a letter or resolution validating, recognizing and reaffirming the their commitment to the Airspace and Wireless Licensing Program. The Division of Right of Way will also be requesting similar documentation from the Director's Office. It is our hope that such documentation will greatly assist those agents who are working diligently in the Districts throughout the State. Letters from the Director's Office and the CTC will also help clarify to those outside the program the valuable contributions the Airspace Program makes to the Department's continuing effort to seeking solutions to our transportation needs.

BRUCE C. WILSON  
Airspace and Wireless Program  
Division of Right of Way